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Jeffrey S. Poulter, M.D., FACS

Body Contouring Contributes to Healthy Self-Image

By: Sara Browning

Beauty may be only skin deep, but the ability to sport a sleek physique can penetrate to the heart of one's self-confidence. Dr. Jeffrey Poulter targets a kaleidoscope of services aimed at improving an individual's physical—and emotional—wellbeing.

The ABC's of self-esteem begin with "R"—redefining self. And for Dr. Jeffrey Poulter of Peoria and Bloomington, redefining self means regaining self-confidence regarding one's physical appearance. Whether following the birth of a child, massive weight loss, or a battle with breast cancer, Dr. Poulter believes cosmetic and laser surgery can unlock the self-knowledge and confidence needed to maintain a healthy outlook.

Surgeon, Home Builder, Drummer

A fully-accredited surgical facility with an impeccable reputation, The Center for Cosmetic and Laser Surgery gives individuals confidence in themselves as well as in the professionals who care for them. Having harnessed seventeen years of experience, Dr. Poulter, M.D., FACS, has used his unequivocal surgical skills, attention to detail and genuine care to assist patients from the Midwest, Indianapolis, St. Louis, Chicago and other cities in becoming happier, well-rounded individuals. Dr. Poulter established his practice in August 1992 and opened his Peoria office in November 2008. Having served just under 16,000 patients, Dr. Poulter sees almost 1,000 new patients per year.

"What I enjoy most about what I do is the immediate gratification I receive from a job well done and knowing that I am improving the way people view themselves," says Dr. Poulter. "Plastic surgery rewards individuals for their hard work in winning a battle with breast cancer or losing excessive amounts of weight, and I'm glad that I can be a part of the process."

With an undergraduate degree from the University of Illinois in Champaign as well as his medical degree from Southern Illinois University in Springfield, Dr. Poulter is well known to the Peoria and Bloomington communities. An avid supporter of Race for the Cure, he has been an active participant on the Susan G. Komen Board in Bloomington for six years where he has served



photo by: Jerry Dellinger Photography

as Vice President. This year, Dr. Poulter will again be a guest speaker at the Woman's Lifestyle Show.

"I think Peoria has a great medical community," he says.

The plastic surgeon has spent half a decade helping Habitat for Humanity build homes. And the man sitting behind the drum set at Wesley United Methodist Church in Bloomington is none other than Dr. Poulter, a member of the Sunday jazz band. Extremely active in his faith, he not only sings in the church choir but also co-chairs his

church's Men's Group and heads a ministry in which fathers write letters of appreciation to their families. Dr. Poulter says he likes to bring a "Christian attitude" to the plastic surgery profession.

First Steps & Final Outcomes

Although the results of cosmetic and laser surgery can be gratifying and exciting, the decision to follow through with surgery is an important step that raises several questions only a board-certified plastic surgeon can answer. Dr. Poulter conducts pre-surgical consultations with his patients to discuss their options and the probable outcomes of the procedure. He is open and honest with patients, encouraging good nutrition along with exercise and gives realistic answers rather than embellished truths regarding surgical outcomes.

"Body consultations encompass various areas of discussion," says Dr. Poulter. "I ask patients to name their areas of concern. We take photographs and use computer imaging to give patients an idea of how their bodies will look. The computer imaging shows where the incisions and sutures will be by diagramming it in their photos. It shows them the realities of what they need and don't need to have done. It's important for my patients to take a realistic approach to weight loss and body contouring and not shoot for a look that is impossible to maintain for their body type."

The Center performs a number of invasive and non-invasive procedures. Dr. Poulter's work is roughly 85 percent cosmetic and 15 percent reconstructive. Dr. Poulter's early years conducting business in Illinois were spent on hand surgery, skin cancer removal, liposuction and tummy tucks. His focus for the past five or six years has shifted to body contouring, the shaping and revising of areas of the body that have changed due to pregnancy, weight loss, aging or abnormal development. Body contouring includes such procedures as breast augmentation, reduction, and lift; buttock, thigh, and arm lift; and of course, tummy tucks and liposuction – to name a few.

"A new look means something different for everybody," he says. "Some women never develop breast tissue. Quite a few women want 'mommy makeovers' after the birth of a child. It's refreshing to see how a person's self-esteem seems to skyrocket following a procedure."

The Center for Cosmetic and Laser Surgery also offers non-invasive facial rejuvenation procedures, such as Botox cosmetic and fillers, and more aggressive techniques such as face, neck, eyelid and brow lifts. Dr. Poulter also has three lasers in his Bloomington office that offer state-of-the-art treatment for skin resurfacing, scar revision, spider vein removal and laser hair removal. With a CO-2 laser in each facility, he can remove many unwanted skin lesions without sutures, minimizing scarring.



Dr. Poulter imaging a photo showing a computer simulation that gives patients an estimate of what they may look like following an eyelid and brow lift.

Dr. Poulter works out of his surgical suite, which provides patients all the amenities of a hospital. The environment helps patients who travel long distances—some out of state—feel at home.

"I perform the major operations in my Bloomington office under general anesthesia," says Dr. Poulter. "I have an office attached to a hospital in Bloomington. This is a major convenience for my patients who are admitted to the hospital overnight. For my tummy tuck patients, I pay for their overnight stay. This allows me to be more aggressive in removing the excess skin and fat. I can provide better blood clot (DVT) prevention with air-driven compression boots and early ambulation, and better pain and nausea control with IV medications given by the highly trained nursing staff at the hospital. Families no longer have to worry if they can take care of the patient."

"My office is AAAASF (American Association for the Accreditation of Ambulatory Surgical Facilities) certified, and insurance companies are realizing that AAAASF denotes a facility that is safe and reliable.

Combining procedures also keeps costs low. "The gynecologist and I may combine a hysterectomy with a tummy tuck to save patients the expense of two separate operating rooms and two anesthetic charges," says Dr. Poulter. "This also limits the patient's loss of income during the recovery time."

Depending on the type of procedure, surgeries may last anywhere from one hour to three hours, but the outcome is well worth the wait. "More than 95 percent of cosmetic surgery patients are so pleased, they wouldn't hesitate to do it again," he says.

Feature Story continued



Rachelle Stickard, Front Office Coordinator, is pictured left and Jamie Janowiak, RN, is pictured right.

To Your Health

Over ten million Americans benefited both emotionally and physically from cosmetic and laser surgery last year alone. "Of course, the self esteem issue is huge," says Dr. Poulter. "In today's economy, many patients are treated because they are trying to stay vibrant in a flooded job market. Many mothers who wish to regain the figure they had before childbearing say they never looked so good, even before having children."

But plastic surgery encompasses more than improving an individual's emotional well being. "Plastic surgery goes beyond self esteem issues," says Dr. Poulter. "Some women have trouble exercising because their breasts are so large. For others, excess stomach tissue hangs over their belt and makes physical movement challenging."

Reason to Shine

Dr. Poulter claims one of the facets that helps draw patients through his doors is the quality of care individuals receive. "The doctor-patient relationship is very special," he says. "Patients trust us because they know we are concerned with attention to detail, and this helps us connect with patients one-on-one and give them what they need—not just what they ask for. Sometimes instead of a breast enlargement, I suggest a tummy tuck for those trying to hide a larger stomach. They benefit from having the most cost-effective treatment, many times not needing the surgery they initially came in for. Patients have appreciated my openness and honesty and have been grateful that I offer my professional opinions instead of telling them what they want to hear."

The Center's founding surgeon admits the company "hasn't tried to stand out" but has had opportunities to shine. "I had the

chance to participate in a Juvederm trial before it was released on the market," says Dr. Poulter. "Because of my many years of experience with fillers and Botox, they used my office as one of the study facilities."

Dr. Poulter's relaxed, down-to-earth approach, humility, sensitivity and professional care help his patients feel at ease. His office is filled with thank-you letters and testimonials, including a five-page letter from a woman who underwent a breast augmentation. She wrote: "I still can't believe how great I look . . . To say I am thrilled is certainly an understatement."

"Caring for patients is always the top priority in any procedure," he says. "I want to make sure my patients feel comfortable from day one. My staff is a big part of that comfort level."

What Every Patient Should Know About Their Cosmetic Surgeon:

1. Have they done surgical training in plastic surgery?
2. Do they have hospital privileges to perform your procedure?
3. Is there office accredited for safety?
4. Does their board certification require continuing education in surgery?
5. What is the physician's level of experience with your procedure?

Dr. Poulter's Six Steps Prior to Plastic Surgery:

1. Do Your Homework: Research the procedure, benefits, and risks at www.plasticsurgery.org.
2. Have realistic expectations: Discuss your expectations with your plastic surgeon. Have realistic expectations about side effects and recovery time.
3. Stay Informed: Speak with patients who have had the same procedure, and ask to see pictures of the results.
4. Don't let anyone inject anything into your body without the advice of a doctor.
5. Check to see that your surgeon is accredited by the American Board of Plastic Surgery, which indicates complete training in plastic surgery. You can check online at www.abplsurg.org or by calling 1-866-ASK-ABMS.
6. Many plastic surgeons with a focus on cosmetic surgery have earned membership in ASAPS (the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery, Inc.).

Dr. Poulter is certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery and the American Board of Surgery. He is a member of the American Society of Plastic surgeons and the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery. For more information on Dr. Jeffrey Poulter, log onto www.bodycontouringexperts.com or contact Dr. Jeffrey Poulter at his Peoria office at 309-692-6869 or in Bloomington at 309-663-1222.